

REMARKS

In the Office Action dated July 15, 2005, claims 1, 8, 13, 16, 18, and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 over U.S. Patent No. 5,630,169 (Jackson); claim 2 was rejected under § 103 over Jackson in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,381,674 (DeKoning); claims 4, 19 and 23 were rejected under § 103 over Jackson in view of “common knowledge in the art;” and claim 17 was rejected under § 103 over Jackson in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,790,775 (Marks).

Applicant acknowledges the indication that claims 3, 5-7, 9-12, 14, 15, 20, and 21 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Claims 5, 7, 9, 10, 14, 15, and 20 have been amended from dependent form to independent form to place these claims in condition for allowance.

Claims 1, 13, 18, and 19 have been cancelled, without prejudice, to render the rejection of these claims moot.

Claim 22 has been amended to recite that each of the plural storage subsystems has a means for controlling access to storage devices, and a plurality of expanding means at plural levels for coupling to the storage devices, in combination with the means for interconnecting element. The plurality of expanding means at plural levels element is similar to the element in claim 10 that was deemed by the Examiner as being allowable. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claim 22 is allowable over Jackson.

Allowance of all claims is respectfully requested. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees and/or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 08-2025 (200300857-1).

Respectfully submitted,

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